



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

May 23, 2001

S. 498 **National Discovery Trails Act of 2001**

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
on May 16, 2001*

Assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing S. 498 would cost the federal government about \$2 million over the next five fiscal years. Enacting S. 498 would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. The bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would have no significant impact on the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

S. 498 would establish “national discovery trails” as a new category within the National Trails System (NTS). National discovery trails would be extended, continuous, interstate trails designated on federal lands (or nonfederal property with the consent of the owner). Each discovery trail would be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture (Forest Service) or the Interior (National Park Service), as appropriate. Additionally, the respective secretary would have to manage each discovery trail in cooperation with at least one trailwide volunteer-based organization.

Finally, S. 498 would designate a 6,000-mile route as the American Discovery Trail. This first national discovery trail would be managed by the National Park Service (NPS), which would be prohibited from acquiring any land outside of federally administered areas solely for the purpose of the trail. The NPS would have three years to submit a comprehensive management plan for the development and use of the trail.

CBO estimates that the cost of adding another category to the NTS would have no effect on the federal budget. Establishing the American Discovery Trail would cost about \$1 million over fiscal years 2002 through 2004. This one-time cost would include amounts to develop the comprehensive management plan and create exhibits and other interpretive materials. CBO estimates that beginning in fiscal year 2005, the NPS would spend between \$0.4 million and \$0.6 million annually to manage and maintain the trail, depending on how much of this effort would be borne by nonfederal entities such as volunteer organizations or

state and local governments. One-time costs and subsequent annual costs would thus total about \$2 million over the 2002-2005 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts. This estimate is based on information provided by the NPS.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Deborah Reis. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.